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News letters

The following information is from a report written by Shelton's Academic Dean Arthur Howington

Auburn University has provided data on the performance of transfers to that institution from twenty-one (21) Alabama two-year institutions. The population for which data are supplied includes all transfers from the Summer term 1989 through the Fall term 1994.

During this period, Auburn University accepted 5,474 transfers from Alabama two-year institutions. Fifty seven (57) of those transfers came from Shelton State Community College (SSCC). SSCC ranked third from the bottom in the number of transfers to Auburn. The school which supplied the largest number of transfers to Auburn was Southern Union (N=1,267); the school sending the fewest transfers to Auburn was Bishop State (N=13).

Of the fifty-seven (57) SSCC included in the data, (25,44 %) were still enrolled at Auburn. Thirteen (13,23%) had discontinued their enrollment at Auburn, and nineteen (19,33%) had graduated.

The percent of SSCC transfers who had graduated (33%) was equal to the mean graduation rate for the transfer group. The percent of SSCC transfers who had either graduated or were still enrolled at Auburn (77%) was almost the same at the graduation/enrollment rate (78%) for the total transfer group.

The most successful institution in terms of graduates was Chattahoochee Valley Community College.

was less than one-half of a letter grade. On average, the SSCC transfers were "C+" students while

Forty-seven percent (47%) of its transfers had graduated.

On average (mean), the SSCC transfers to Auburn stayed at their "home" institution, i.e., SSCC, for six (6) quarters. This was equal to the mean for for this measure for all transfer to Auburn. During their stay at SSCC, on average (mean) SSCC transfers earned 68.8 hours. This is somewhat less than the mean number of hours (80.2) earned by all two-year transfers to Auburn. While at SSCC, the Auburn transfer group earned a mean GPA of 2.99. This was slightly lower than the mean GPA (3.01) for the total transfer group.

While at Auburn, the SSCC transfers on average (mean) stayed for 6.4 quarters and earned 96.4 hours. The mean for these measures for the total group is 5.3 quarters and 79.5 hours. Thus, SSCC transfers stayed longer than the average of the transfer group and earned a greater number of hours. This, however, seems to be a logical result of the fact that SSCC transfers seemed to have left their "home" institution a bit earlier than did students in the total transfer group.

At Auburn, SSCC transfers in their first term at the senior institution earned a mean GPA of 2.53. This is evidence of some "transfer shock," but the result abilities and that the courses that are taught at SSCC are as rigorous and demanding as those

at SSCC, and they were "C+" students during their term at Auburn.

Futhermore, the differential (.46) between the mean GPA at SSCC and the mean GPA earned during the first term at Auburn was less for SSCC transfers than for every other two year institution except one, Jefferson State Community College.

In terms of mean GPA, SSCC transfers to Auburn improved a bit. The mean GPA earned by SSCC transfers to Auburn was 2.61. This was slightly higher than the mean GPA (2.58) earned by all the two-year transfers to Auburn. By way of comparison, only seven of the twenty other institutions included in the study had earned by this group during their higher mean GPAs than did SSCC. The difference between the mean GPA of SSCC transfers (2.61) and the mean GPA of transfers from Shoals Community College(2.83), the institution with the highest mean GPA, was only a bit over two-tenths of a point.

What conclusions can be drawn from this data? First it seems clear that, on the whole, SSCC transfers to Auburn have done well, at least in comparison to transfers from other two-year institutions. There is little in this data to indicate that massive improvements are needed in the transfer programs of the institution. Second, SSCC transfers did experience transfer shock. The mean GPA during the first term and the overall mean GPA were lower than the mean at SSCC. The "shock was not great: it was all within the 'C+" range. And the impact of transfer shock appears to have been less lan for transfers from most other two-year institutions. Still the data does indicate that SSCC faculty need to continue their efforts to ensure that the grades which students receive

at senior institutions.

The data provided in Auburn University allows a separate analysis of three separate groups of transfers, i.e. those who had discontinued their enrollment at Auburn, those who had graduated from Auburn and those who were still enrolled at Auburn at the time the data was provided.

The data provided for these various groups includes little that is surprising. The "discontinued" group of transfers stayed at SSCC for about the same amount of time as the other groups, but the mean SSCC GPA of of the group (2.92) was a bit lower than for the total group of SSCC transfers. The mean GPA first term at Auburn (2.16) was lower than for the total group of SSCC transfer, as was the overall mean GPA (1.83) earned by the "discontinued" group. This was the same pattern exhibited by the total group of "discontinued" students from all two-year institutions. The SSCC transfers who had graduated from Auburn demonstrated the best performance of the three groups. Their mean first term (GPA 2.77) was higher, as was the mean GPA (2.89) for their entire stay at Auburn University. Again, this was similar to the pattern exhibited by all two year transfers who had graduated from Auburn.

There is little in this information which points to specific improvements which can be made by Shelton State. The data simply provides statistical reinforcement for the long-held observation that--in general--upon transfer to a senior institution, students who did well at the two-year school continue to do well; and students who did poorly at the two-year institution continue to do poorly.